

Justification of Violence and Security in the Family System as Predictors of Child-to-Parent Violence

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The abuse of a child towards his/her parents, also known as parental violence (CPV), constitutes a serious social and family problem due to its short- and long-term consequences, which not only directly affect the victim but also generate a rupture within the family nucleus. This type of violence is defined as that "in which the child acts intentionally and consciously with the desire to cause harm, prejudice and/or suffering towards his/her parents, repeatedly over time, and with the immediate aim of obtaining power, control and dominance over his/her parents in order to achieve something through psychological, economic and/or physical violence"(Aroca, 2010).

Although there is still insufficient data and studies on this subject, research is gradually increasing in this regard, as is its prevalence. Previous studies have found that certain family and personal variables are risk factors for the development of CPV. The objective of this study was to analyze the relationship of justification of violence and security in the family system (security, disengagement and preoccupation) with child-to-parent violence (CPV) towards mother and father.

Sample comprised 183 adolescents (97 male and 86 female high school students), between 13 and 18 years old (Mean age = 14.94; SD = .81) from the province of Málaga. Child-to-Parent Aggression Questionnaire (CPAQ; Calvete, Gámez-Guadix, Orue, González-Diez, López de Arroyabe, Sampedro, et al., 2013) was employed to assess CPV towards mother and father. Justification of violence and security in the family system were analyzed using the Justification of Violence subscale of the Irrational Beliefs Scale for Adolescents (ECIA; Cardeñoso & Calvete, 2004) and the Security in the Family System Scale (SIFS; Forman & Davies, 2005), respectively. Sample was divided between male and female participants, and lineal multiple regression analyses were carried out for both of them.

Regarding violence towards mother, results showed that, in the case of female participants, there was a significant relationship with disengagement, whereas in the case of male participants there was a significant relationship with both justification of violence and security in the family environment. Conversely, with regard to violence towards father, there was a significant relationships with justification of violence in the case of females, and with justification and violence and disengagement in the case of male participants. However, no relationship was found between the preoccupation subscale and child-to-parent violence.

The present study contributes to increase the knowledge on the psychological profiles characteristic of Child-to-parent violence, and shows the role of the justification of violence and the security in the family system of the perpetrator. These findings indicate the importance of taking into account those variables in preventing violence towards parents.